

## ARNOLD ARBORETUM

HARVARD UNIVERSITY



## BULLETIN

OF

## POPULAR INFORMATION

JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

MAY 27, 1916

The Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) is blooming well this year, although the flower-buds of this southern tree are sometimes killed in this latitude. The southern Redbud is a common woodland tree from southern New Jersey to Nebraska and to Florida and eastern Texas. Under favorable conditions it is often forty or fifty feet high, but cultivated here at the north it rarely grows to half that size. In some parts of the country, especially in eastern Oklahoma, southern Arkansas and eastern Texas, it makes in early spring one of the most brilliant floral features of the American forest. There is a white-flowered form (var. *alba*) which was found a few years ago in one of the western states, and a plant of this variety is now in flower on Hickory Path near Centre Street. The Texas Redbud (*C. reniformis*) lives in the Arboretum on Azalea Path, but the branches are often killed in severe winters and it has not yet flowered here. *C. chinensis* is also to be seen on the upper side of Azalea Path; it is a shrub from western China which has long been cultivated in Japanese gardens and first reached this country from Japan several years ago. The plants of Japanese origin were never hardy here but those raised from Chinese seeds are more successful and sometimes flower more fully than they are blooming this year. The flowers are larger and are of a better color than those of the American species, and in the neighborhood of New York and further south this little Redbud is one of the most beautiful of early-flowering shrubs. Young plants of *C. racemosa* from central China have not proved hardy in the Arboretum. This with its long drooping clusters of large flowers is probably the most beautiful member of the genus. The Redbud, or Judas-tree of southern Europe,

*C. siliquastrum*, is not hardy in New England. There is also a white-flowered form of this tree.

**Malus Sargentii.** Only about half the plants of this Japanese species are blooming in the Arboretum this year. This failure to flower is not a common occurrence, and this wide-spreading, Japanese shrub is an excellent plant for small gardens or to plant in front of a group of the larger growing Crabapples. It blooms later than the Asiatic species. The flowers, although smaller than those of the other species, are attractive because the petals, which are tinged with rose color before the buds open, after opening are pale straw color, the large bright yellow anthers adding to the beauty of the flowers. The bright scarlet, comparatively large fruits of this shrub remain on the branches until spring but do not appear to be relished by birds.

**Malus Sieboldii.** This Chinese and Japanese Crabapple is one of the last of the Asiatic species to flower in the Arboretum. Although the flowers are hardly more than three-quarters of an inch in diameter, the plants when in bloom are attractive, for like those of other Crabapples they do not all open at once, and the dark rose-colored buds make a delightful contrast with the expanded petals which are pure white on the inner surface and faintly tinged with rose color on the outer surface, especially on the margins. The dark gray-green of the young leaves adds to the interest of these plants when they are in bloom. The form of this Crabapple on which this species was founded is a round-topped shrub three or four feet high and eight or ten feet broad with stout, rather drooping branches. There is a tree form (var. *arborescens*) with tall stems and long branches spreading horizontally. The two forms which were raised from seed sent to the Arboretum many years ago from Pekin are in the old collection on the Forest Hills Road and in the collection at the base of Peter's Hill, and they are both flowering well this year. The fruit of this Crabapple is very small, and on some individuals it is red and on others yellow.

**Exochorda Giraldui Wilsonii.** The Chinese Pearl Bush (*Exochorda racemosa*) has long been a familiar and much admired shrub in many American gardens on account of its showy racemes of large pure white flowers. Old specimens assume an open and not a very attractive habit, and lose much of their early beauty. The variety (*E. Giraldui*) which was discovered by Wilson in western China and named for him, although in its native country it is a wide-spreading shrub, in cultivation here grows like a tree with a single straight stem and comparatively short branches which form a narrow pyramidal head. The flowers are much larger than those of the old-fashioned Pearl Bush, and this new introduction promises to be a better garden plant. It is now well established in the Arboretum where several plants are now in flower, and in other Massachusetts gardens. The Chinese *Exochorda* is best known as *E. grandiflora*, but the older and correct name is *E. racemosa*. On Hickory Path, near Centre Street, *E. macrantha*, an interesting hybrid between the Chinese *E. racemosa* and *E. Korolkowii* from central Asia,



is in flower. The flowers and foliage resemble those of the Chinese plant but the branches, like those of its Turkestan parent, are much more upright in growth.

**Morus acidosa.** This is one of the most interesting and perhaps one of the most economically valuable of the plants introduced by Wilson. It is a perfectly hardy shrub which on the cliffs of western China sometimes grows to the height of twenty feet, although usually it is not more than six or eight feet high. The plants in the Arboretum are now four or five feet tall and from six to eight feet in diameter. The leaves are sometimes deeply lobed and sometimes entire. The flowers, although rather smaller, resemble in general appearance those of other Mulberries. The fruit, which is produced in great quantities, ripens in the Arboretum at the end of June. It is about half an inch long, black and lustrous and has a pleasant subacid flavor. It is suggested that this Mulberry may prove exceedingly valuable in supplying hens with food. Its dwarf habit makes it possible to plant it in small yards; plants raised from seeds begin to bear fruit in six or seven years, and the fruit which drops in a small area under the bushes would be easily found by the birds. *Morus acidosa* is a common and widely distributed plant in eastern Asia, being found from Japan and Korea to the extreme western borders of China, in Formosa and in India. Plants now in flower in the Arboretum can be seen at the end of the bed containing the collection of Chinese plants on the southern slope of Bussey Hill. This is one of the coldest and most exposed positions in the Arboretum. Several of these Mulberries can also be seen in the Peter's Hill Nursery.

**Rhododendron (Azalea) canescens.** The flowers of this northern pink-flowered Azalea soon follow those of *Rhododendron (Azalea) Vaseyi*, the earliest of the American species to open its flowers. It is a common shrub on the hillsides of central Massachusetts, and ranges far southward in the eastern states. *R. canescens* has been largely planted on both sides of Azalea Path, and the mass of these plants on the right-hand side of the Meadow Road is covered with opening flower-buds and will in a few days be one of the most attractive objects in the whole Arboretum.

**Rhododendron (Azalea) Schlippenbachii.** This Azalea, raised from seeds brought from Korea by Mr. Jack, has flowered abundantly this year on the upper side of Azalea Path. It is one of the handsomest of the Asiatic Azaleas, and has large, obovate leaves and white flowers more or less tinged with rose which are three inches or three inches and a half across. It is a very common plant on the low grass-covered hills which rise above the Korean coast and in eastern Manchuria, but it is still little known in gardens. Mr. H. J. Veitch found it in 1892 in a nursery garden in Tokyo and sent plants to England where, although a picture of it was published two years later in the Botanical Magazine, very little has been heard of it. This beautiful plant promises so well in this climate that it should be taken up by American or Dutch nurserymen that it may be possible to plant it in quantity.

**Fothergillas.** The three species of *Fothergilla* are flowering unusually well this year. This is a genus of shrubs related to the Witch Hazels. The small white flowers are produced in nearly round terminal clusters, and the foliage which has the general appearance of that of the Witch Hazel, turns in the autumn to brilliant shades of red and orange. The largest specimen in the Arboretum is a plant of *F. major* in the Hamamelis Group near the small pond at the junction of the Meadow and the Bussey Hill Roads; and the three species can be seen in the Shrub Collection and on Azalea Path where there are a number of plants. First cultivated in England more than a century ago, *Fothergilla* seems to have disappeared from gardens until it was reintroduced by the Arboretum a few years ago. Few of the shrubs of eastern North America are more interesting and conspicuous when in flower than these inhabitants of the southern states.

**Bush Honeysuckles.** For northern gardens there are no more beautiful shrubs than some of the Bush Honeysuckles, for in early spring they are covered with myriads of yellow, white, rose-colored or red flowers, and in summer or autumn with lustrous, usually scarlet fruits. Many of these shrubs are able to show their greatest beauty in this climate, but this can be obtained only by planting them in rich soil and with sufficient space for growth in all directions. In poor soil and when crowded by other plants they are usually miserable objects. The large-growing kinds, like *L. tatarica*, *L. bella*, and *L. notha*, should be planted as isolated specimens at least twenty feet from any other plant. *L. Morrowii*, a plant of the Amoor region, requires even more space for its lowest branches which cling close to the ground and naturally spread over a great area. This shrub has gray-green foliage, comparatively large white flowers and bright red fruits. Like many other Bush Honeysuckles, *L. Morrowii* hybridizes easily with other species, and most of the plants raised from seeds sold by nurserymen are hybrids of that species with *L. tatarica* and are of little value for those who want plants with the peculiar habit of *L. Morrowii*. Among vigorous growing plants in this group attention is called to two hybrids of *L. Korolkowii* in the Sub-Collection, *L. amoena* and *L. Arnoldiana*. These have gray-green foliage and small, bright pink, very attractive flowers. *L. chrysantha* from eastern Siberia, with large yellow flowers, is also a conspicuous object at this time. There is a large collection of these Bush Honeysuckles in the general Shrub Collection, and plants of a few of the larger-growing kinds have been planted in the grass border on the right-hand side of the Bussey Hill Road, opposite the Lilac Collection to show how these plants can develop when sufficient room for free growth is given to them.

The Lilacs this year, on the whole, are more covered with flowers than ever before and are now in their best condition. Many of the plants of the newer varieties which have been added to the collection in recent years are now large enough to show their real qualities, and add greatly this year to the beauty and interest of the display.